



Inclusion and meaningful participation for all youth in educational, employment, social, community and leadership opportunities are the heart of equitable youth empowerment.

Dare to Dream Student Leadership Initiative

Rhode Island transition age students (14-21) are encouraged to participate in the Dare to Dream Student Leadership Initiative, which includes an annual conference and ongoing leadership development opportunities. Through a positive youth development approach, students explore, develop, and showcase concepts of leadership.

Rhode Island students with disabilities are in need of targeted school and community programming to increase the positive outcomes:

- Achieving successful transition to adulthood.
- Developing deeper connections to their communities and peers.
- Feeling more in control of their lives.

*We all
have a voice.
No matter how loudly
or softly we speak, we all
have a voice.*



Dare to Dream

www.ritap.org/MyTransition



Dare to Dream

**Student Leadership
Conference &
Youth Development
Initiative**

Annual Dare to Dream Conference

The purpose of the conference is to provide students with special needs an opportunity to examine concepts of transition and to share experiences with other students. The primary goal of the conference is to help students gain self-determination and leadership skills.



- Held at the URI Kingston Campus. Having the conference at a university shows students that they are viewed as young adults and gives the students a college campus experience.
- Young adult leaders and emerging student leaders explore, develop and lead motivational keynote address, presentations, and interactive workshops.
- Student and young adult leaders—having shared their accomplishments and experiences with those coming up behind them—leave the conference with deeper connections to their communities and their peers, and feel more in control of their lives.
- After attending the conference, students begin to understand they are not alone, that their voice does matter, see their future as a set of options they can control, and there are people and resources to help them.

Dare to Dream Student Leadership Opportunities



Dare to Dream aims to assist schools, communities, youth-serving organizations, and student leaders in providing positive youth development supports and opportunities.

This will help students be connected, productive, and further their own areas of personal development by:

- Helping students become self aware and better understand their personal talents, values, interests.
- Developing tools and opportunities for students to further understand and develop leadership skills and foundations.
- Helping students understand how their personal values influence motivation and how this can benefit teamwork.
- Giving “voice” to all students involved while working to build a collective vision or common purpose.
- Helping students understand communication processes and their benefits and inherent challenges.
- Promoting and providing an inclusive and engaging environment for diverse students and their ideas.
- Helping students understand their connection not only to the school, but to the greater community.

How can schools and youth-serving organizations take advantage of this opportunity?

Through an accessible and dynamic presentation curriculum developed for teachers and students which will empower students to find their voice, build their workshop and take on a leadership role in school, at the conference and in the community.

1. Start a **Dare to Dream** leadership development opportunity at your school.
2. Go to the Dare to Dream section on the My Transitions page on the RITAP website at <http://ritap.org/ritap/mytransition/upcoming-events.php>
3. Click on the Dare to Dream link to find out how.



Youth with special needs are those who have or are at increased risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.